

UNIVERSITY OF  
LUCERNE

FACULTY OF LAW

INSTITUTE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY  
LEGAL STUDIES – LUCERNAIURIS

# CRITICAL TIMES 2025 DISRUPTIONS

SUMMER SCHOOL



30 JUNE – 4 JULY 2025  
UNIVERSITY OF LUCERNE

## Programme

Monday 30 June

09.15-09.30	Welcome Room 3.B58
09.30-12.30	Seminar 1 <b>Strategies of Resignification: Making Strange, Repair, Prefiguration, Judgment</b> Julen Etxabe (University of British Columbia) Room 3.B58 <i>Coffee Break 10.45-11.15</i>
12.30-14.00	Lunch Mensa
14.00-15.15	Presentation Session 1 Moderation: Shane Chalmers (University of Hong Kong) Room 3.B58 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Luiza Tavares de la Motta (Queen Mary University of London), <b>Creature, Creator and 'The Modern Prometheus': The Emotional Experience of Time in the Crisis of Legitimation of Judge-Made Law in the Nineteenth Century</b></li> <li>· Jack Chou (University of Hong Kong), <b>Romance in Politics; Politics in Romans</b></li> </ul>
15.15-15.45	Coffee Break Mensa
15.45-17.00	Presentation Session 2 Moderation: Mónica López Lerma (Reed College) Room 3.B58 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Anna Stone-Stacy (The Australian National University), <b>Photography's Role in Disrupting the Archive</b></li> <li>· Alex More (University of Notre Dame Australia), <b>Todd Phillips: Directing the Event</b></li> </ul>
18.00-19.15	Special Event 1 <b>Violent Legalities and the Politics of Rights: Struggles for the Human at the End of the Liberal Order?</b> Lara Montesinos Coleman (University of Sussex) Room 3.B58 Moderation: Vagias Karavas (University of Lucerne)
19.15-21.00	Apéro Mensa

Tuesday 1 July

09.30-12.30	Seminar 2 <b>Disrupting Law Through Documentary Film</b> Mónica López Lerma (Reed College) Room 3.B58 <i>Coffee Break 10.45-11.15</i>
12.30-14.00	Lunch Mensa
14.00-15.45	Presentation Session 3 Moderation: Julen Etxabe (University of British Columbia) Room 3.B58 · Julie Hoppenbrouwers (Erasmus School of Law), <b>Deep Disruption: Large Language Models and the Hermeneutic Experience of the Legal Professions</b> · Jan Okonski (University of Lodz), <b>Disruptions and Crises: Voegelin and Husserl on Sense and Society</b> · Gavin Keeney (Independent Scholar), <b>Edition of One - 'No Rights'</b>
15.45-16.15	Coffee Break Mensa
16.15-17.45	Special Event 2 <b>Law and Space: Disrupting the Universal</b> Sabarish Suresh (National University of Singapore) Room 3.B58

Wednesday 2 July

09.30-12.30	Seminar 3 <b>Juris-Geography: The Made Up and the Made Real</b> Shane Chalmers (University of Hong Kong) and Desmond Manderson (The Australian National University) Room 3.B58 <i>Coffee Break 10.45-11.15</i>
12.30-14.00	Lunch Mensa
14.00-15.15	Presentation Session 4 Moderation: Greta Olson (University of Giessen) Room 3.B58 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Griffin Werner (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), <b>Disrupting Whiteness: How Can White People Participate in Collective Struggle?</b></li><li>· Kirill Olmezov (Ghent University), <b>From Disruption to Legitimacy: Cultural Narratives and the Justification of Legal Exception in Russia</b></li></ul>
15.15-15.45	Coffee Break Mensa
17.30-20.30	Special Event 3 <b>A Minor Jurisprudence of Refusal: A Question of Silence (dir. Marleen Gorris, 1982)</b> Film screening and talk with Başak Ertür (Goldsmiths, University of London) Stattkino, Bourbaki Moderation: Steven Howe (University of Lucerne)
20.30-22.00	Apéro Stattkino, Bourbaki

Thursday 3 July

09.30-12.30	Seminar 4 <b>Introduction to Post-Apocalyptic Law</b> Malte-Christian Gruber (University of Giessen) Room 3.B58 <i>Coffee Break 10.45-11.15</i>
12.30-14.00	Lunch Mensa
14.00-15.45	Presentation Session 5 Moderation: Vagias Karavas (University of Lucerne) Room 3.B58 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Quinn Edwards (University of the Sunshine Coast), <b>AIE: Confirmation or Disruption?</b></li><li>· Joy Hannah Panaligan (University of Southern California), <b>Narratives of Metaverse Filipino Workers (MFW): Alternative Labor in Digital Futures</b></li><li>· Rüya Tuna Toparlak (University of Lucerne), <b>The New Voyeurism: Criminalizing the Creation of 'Deepfake Porn'</b></li></ul>
15.45-16.15	Coffee Break Mensa
16.15-17.30	Presentation Session 6 Moderation: Sabarish Suresh (National University of Singapore) Room 3.B58 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Shelley Kolstad (Queensland University of Technology), <b>Mangrove Discourses</b></li><li>· Veronica Pecile (LUMSA University of Rome), <b>Nature is Made: The Legal Invention of the Venetian Lagoon</b></li></ul>
18.00-19.00	Special Event 4 <b>Working with Disruptions: Life Happens</b> Laura Petersen (University of Lucerne) and Valeria Vázquez Guevara (University of Hong Kong) Room 3.B58

Friday 4 July

09.30-12.30	Seminar 5 <b>Disrupting the Affective Work of Anti-Immigration Narratives and Images</b> Greta Olson (University of Giessen) Room 3.B58 <i>Coffee Break 10.45-11.15</i>
12.30-12.45	Closing Remarks Room 3.B58
12.45-14.00	Lunch Mensa
17.30-20.00	Farewell Drinks Mensa Oase, HSLU

## Seminars

### Seminar 1

#### **Strategies of Resignification: Making Strange, Repair, Prefiguration, Judgment**

Julen Etxabe (University of British Columbia)



That Silicon Valley tycoons and new authoritarian leaders are comfortable deploying the language of 'disruption'—a term they use without irony, embarrassment, or self-awareness—and that actions with deeply troubling and socially irresponsible consequences are being positively described as 'disruptive', should give us pause and some cause for concern. When did 'disruption' become a term of boastful pride for the inegalitarian consolidation of power?

Can the language of 'disruption' be rescued from being thus coopted? Or is it, like terms such as 'fake news' or 'woke', damaged beyond repair, having lost all meaning?

The seminar will ask these questions while exploring strategies of resignification, which can be put at the service of practices of equality, democratic inclusion, and pluralism.

### Readings

- 'Disrupter-in-Chief', The *Economist*, 23 November 2024
- Jorge Luis Roggero, 'Ostranenie' in *Research Handbook on Law and Literature*, ed. by Peter Goodrich, Daniela Gandorfer and Cecilia Gebruers (Cheltenham, 2022), pp. 28-37
- Amy Cohen & Bronwen Morgan, 'Prefigurative Legality', *Law & Social Inquiry* 48 (3) (2023), 1053-1082
- Julen Etxabe, 'Jacques Rancière and the Dramaturgy of Law', in *Rancière and Law*, ed. by Mónica López Lerma and Julen Etxabe (Abingdon & New York, 2018), pp. 17-42

## Seminar 2

### Disrupting Law Through Documentary Film

Mónica López Lerma (Reed College)



The past two decades have seen an explosion in documentary films focusing on criminal trials, wrongful convictions, and unsolved crimes. From classic documentaries like *Paradise Lost Trilogy* (1996, 2000, 2011) and *Capturing the Friedmans* (2003) to Netflix's highly popular and controversial true-crime series *Making a Murderer* (2015, 2018) and *Tiger King* (2020), these documentaries have in common that they reveal the fallibility and flaws of the criminal justice system, denouncing miscarriages of justice. Beyond their entertainment value, these documentaries are reshaping the legal imagination. While traditional trial documentaries used to provide certainty and

closure, this new wave of documentaries leave viewers uncertain, mistrustful, and frustrated. And yet, addressed as jurors, judges, investigators, or witnesses of the shortcomings of the judicial system and the law, viewers may feel compelled to act.

Central questions to be discussed are: What constitutes evidence in these documentaries? What discursive and interpretative frames do they deploy to present facts and events? What affective and ethical relationships do they establish with their subjects? What judgments of credibility, truthfulness, and accuracy do they invite? What disruptive images of law and justice do they construct, and on what basis?

## Readings

- Kristen Fuhs, 'The Legal Trial and/in Documentary Film', *Cultural Studies* 28 (2014), 781-808
- Mónica López Lerma, 'The Evidence of Juridical Documentaries', in *The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Legal Studies*, ed. by Karen Crawley, Thom Giddens and Timothy D. Peters (Abingdon 2024), pp. 319-332
- *Ciutat morta* (2013), directed by Xavier Artigas and Xapo Ortega, Metromüster. Watch documentary here: <https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/ciutat-mort-a-dead-city-2013/>
- Angela Aguayo, 'Introduction', in *Documentary Resistance. Social Change and Participatory Media* (Oxford 2019)

### Seminar 3

#### **Juris-Geography: The Made Up and the Made Real**

Shane Chalmers (University of Hong Kong) and Desmond Manderson (The Australian National University, via Zoom)

“[In] the history of colonial invasion maps are always first drawn by the victors, since maps are instruments of conquest. Geography is therefore the art of war but can also be the art of resistance if there is a counter-map and a counter-strategy.”  
(Edward Said, *Peace and its Discontents*)



This seminar will take a fresh look at the field of legal geography, first focusing on a series of European maps in order to consider how they make up an imperial fantasy of unknown worlds, and how they then bring those fantasies to life. One example is the work of Abraham Ortelius, sixteenth century Flemish cartographer to King Philip II, for whom geography was “the eye of history” – the disciplinary organ that allows one to visualise the *orbis terrarum*, not as a flat data set, but as a portal onto lives lived across times and continents. What these maps help us to see is how

colonialism is above all a matter of the collision between geographic imaginaries and the physical world. We will look at the ways in which a specific geographic world view – embodied by multiple practices of spatial exploration, documentation, and narration – were integral to the ‘making real’ of settler colonialism in places like Australia; and continue to be so, even in mundane matters like regulations prohibiting driving without a license. But we will also look at how the tools of legal geography, both as an academic discipline and as an artistic pursuit, can disrupt this colonial imaginary. From the counter-mapping of Firelei Báez to the urban calligraphy of the Kowloon King to the family trees of Archie Moore, how might juris-geography remake the world?

#### Readings

- Nicholas Blomley, *Law, Space and the Geographies of Power* (New York/London, 1994), Chapter 1
- Simon Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia* (Melbourne, 1996), Chapter 1
- Thalia Anthony, ‘Governing Crime in the Intervention’, *Law in Context* 27 (2) (2009), 90-113
- Shane Chalmers, ‘The Imaginary King of Kowloon: Projection, Sovereignty, and the Postcolonial’, *Law & Literature* (forthcoming)
- Archie Moore, *Kith and Kin* (2024) [[link to artwork](#)]

*Image: Firelei Báez, Untitled (A Map of the British Empire in America), 2021. Photo: Shane Chalmers*

## Seminar 4

### Introduction to Post-Apocalyptic Law

Malte-Christian Gruber (University of Giessen)



What if it should be over? What if the world as we once thought to know it has already ended? What if all the fears of human development in the Anthropocene materialise and there is no longer any prospect of salvation from the man-made ecological and digital threats that are now making themselves felt ever more drastically in society and politics worldwide? What remains if there is no lifeline, no way out of the polycrisis, and all that is left is a universal sense of unease (Unbehagen) in the downfall?

In the face of multiple planetary threats and global social abysses, into which humanity gazes with both shock and

fascination, and at the edges of which it staggers between climate catastrophes and incidents of war with an almost bizarre lack of concern, we are, perhaps for the last time, faced with the existential question of what to do in a completely new world – and with what kind of law.

#### Readings

- Jeffrey Benjamin Meyers, 'Toward a Post-Apocalyptic Rule of Law', *Laws* 10 (3) (2021) (<https://doi.org/10.3390/laws10030065>)
- Slavoj Žižek, 'From Catastrophe to Apocalypse... and Back', *Apocalyptic* 1 (2022), 36-53 (<https://doi.org/10.17885/heiup.apoc.2022.1.24604>)
- Malte-C. Gruber, 'The Anthropocenic Cupola: On Future Models of Climate Change Liability', *Zeitschrift für Rechtssozialologie* 44 (1) (2024), 67-110 (<https://doi.org/10.1515/zfrs-2023-1004>)

#### Additional Background Readings

- Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York, 1961)
- Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract* (Ann Arbor, 1995)
- Slavoj Žižek, *Heaven in Disorder* (New York/London, 2021)
- Id., 'Unbehagen in der Natur': *On Thinking the End of Nature*, keynote presented at the conference Politics of Nature: Philosophical Perspectives on the Anthropocene, ICI Berlin, 20 October 2022, video recording, mp4, 55:02 (<https://doi.org/10.25620/e221020-1>)

*Image: David Alfonso Siqueiros, The End of the World (El fin del mundo), 1936*

## Seminar 5

### Disrupting the Affective Work of Anti-Immigration Narratives and Images

Greta Olson (Center for Diversity, Media and Law, University of Giessen)



The recent increase of anti-immigration rhetoric has led not only to an expansion of the sayable but also to an increase in hate crimes against minoritized persons. Dehumanizing rhetoric about immigrants has spurred on hate crimes against Muslims and Latinx Americans and persons 'read' as migrant in Europe and the United States. Anti-immigration, anti-Muslim, anti-feminist, and anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric and legal initiatives in the United States and Europe draw on similar repertoires of scapegoating tropes and narratives. This includes victimizing images like the one shown here.

This seminar examines ways to disrupt the cultural-political work of anti-immigration narratives and images through law, discourse and affect analysis, and the methods of cultural-legal studies.

## Readings

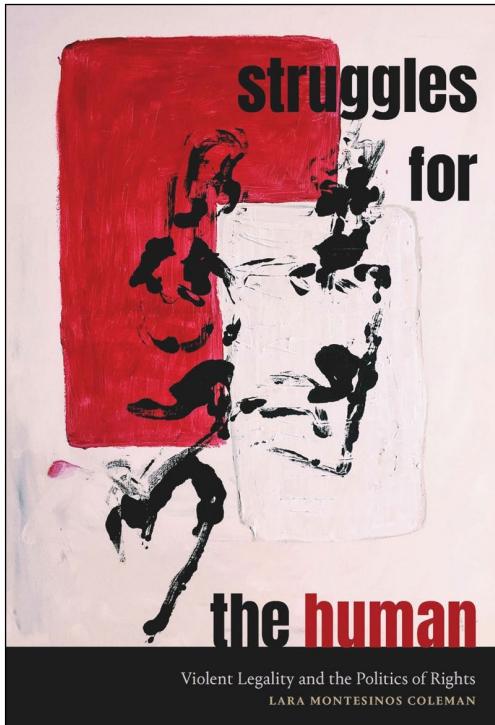
- Andreas von Arnauld, 'Narrating Extraterritoriality: The European Court of Human Rights and Military Action of Convention States Abroad', in *Law, Narrative, Narratology: Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. by Greta Olson and Simon Stern (New York, in press)
- Lilie Chouliaraki, *Wronged: The Weaponization of Victimhood* (New York, 2025), 109-39
- Greta Olson, *From Law and Literature to Legality and Affect* (Oxford, 2022), 154-169

## Special Events

### Special Event 1

#### **Violent Legality and Disruptive Rights? Struggles for the Human at the End of the Liberal Order**

Lara Montesinos Coleman (University of Sussex)



In an era of escalating climate breakdown, fascist resurgence and genocides underwritten by the advanced capitalist countries of the West, do human rights retain any liberatory or disruptive potential? While some cling uncritically to liberal discourses of rights amid laments for liberal democracy and the 'rules-based' order, others highlight the historical complicity between liberalism, colonialism and fascism and insist that any attempt to resist via the defence of liberal rights is doomed to complicity with the structural forces of oppression. Yet, both those embracing rights and those rejecting them tend to overlook the roots of the present crisis in the corporate capture of democracy – and associated 'privatisation' of human rights – in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this context, human rights were incrementally severed from sites of struggle and rendered abstract values within a cosmopolitan ethics that thrived on fantasy and disavowal. Anti-colonial movements, by contrast, have long histories of disruptive uses of human rights that expose the violence of law and capital – as I will explore through my own engagement with some of the struggles. Nevertheless, I will

suggest that such attempts at disruption also risk falling prey to fantasy at a juncture marked by a sense of the inevitability of catastrophe and the exhaustion of critique if they are not shaped within a radical ethics that I denote 'insurgent humanism'.

## Special Event 2

### **Law and Space: Disrupting the Universal**

Sabarish Suresh (National University of Singapore)

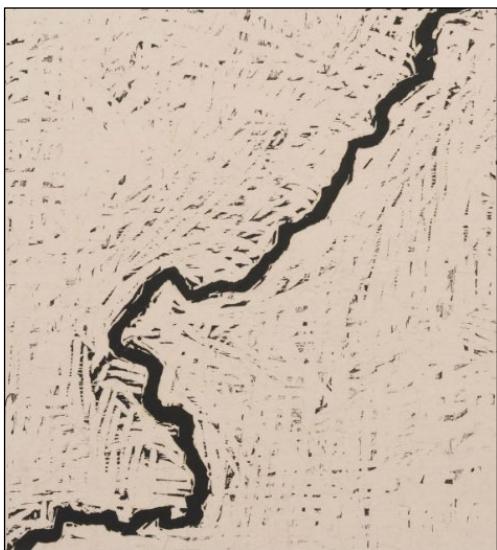
*Can we imagine law without space? What would that look like?*

Would it be a universal floating order untethered to material configurations and corporeal constellations?

*Seems ludicrous? Fanciful? Phantasmatic?*

But is that not what some forms of legal theory, masquerading as legal science, espouse as the essential function of law?

*An abstract universal rule that is capable of being applied to any number of situations, regardless of spatial particularities.*



This session will enquire whether there is a violence to such a form of legal thought. A violence which disrupts an authentic or immanent understanding of the social and the spatial and supplants it in favour of **the** concept of law (you should know that Hart is violently turning in his grave as you read this). Surely, tactics of identification, profiling, policing, and municipal ordering are attentive to notions of scalar and spatial difference. Yet, a spectre of universalism continues to haunt legal theory. One which is often in conflict with the material practices on the ground. If law colonises space and renders it uniform in order to be effective, how could we think of a form of spatial justice?

Space and place, corporeality and materiality, embodiment and embeddedness, flesh and files, vestments and vestibules, architecture and accoutrements, maps and plans, are all

essential substrates to the theatre of the legal spectacle, albeit more or less repressed and their significance varyingly undermined in legal thought. We will disrupt that legal blindness of the spatial – especially as it manifests through the material and the visual – in this collective rumination. A disruption which may offer a radically different way to think about the law, without abandoning it.

#### Reading

- Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 'Law's Spatial Turn: Geography, Justice and a Certain Fear of Space', *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 7 (2) (2010), 187-202

#### Suggested Further Reading

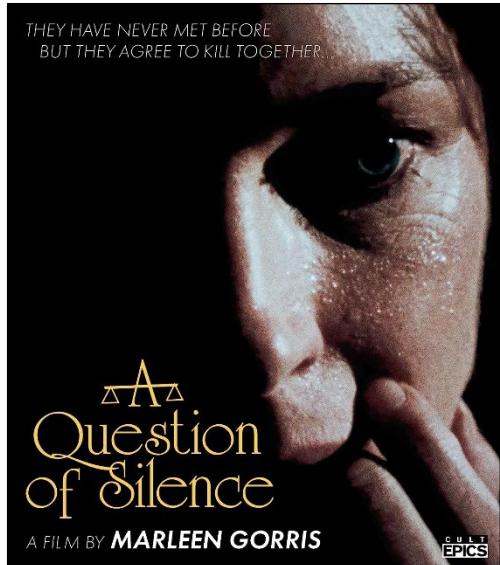
- Linda Mulcahy, 'Segmentation and Segregation' in *Legal Architecture: Justice, Due Process and the Place of Law* (London, 2010), pp. 38-58
- David Delaney, 'Welcome to the Nomosphere\*' in *Nomospheric Investigations: The Spatial, the Legal and the Pragmatics of World-Making* (London, 2010), pp. 1-33
- Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 'Welcome to the Lawscape' in *Spatial Justice: Body, Lawscape, Atmosphere* (London, 2014), pp. 38-106

*Image: Zarina Hashmi, Dividing Line, 2001. Detail.*

Special Event 3

**A Minor Jurisprudence of Refusal: A Question of Silence (dir. Marleen Gorris, 1982)**

Film screening and talk with Başak Ertür (Goldsmiths, University of London)

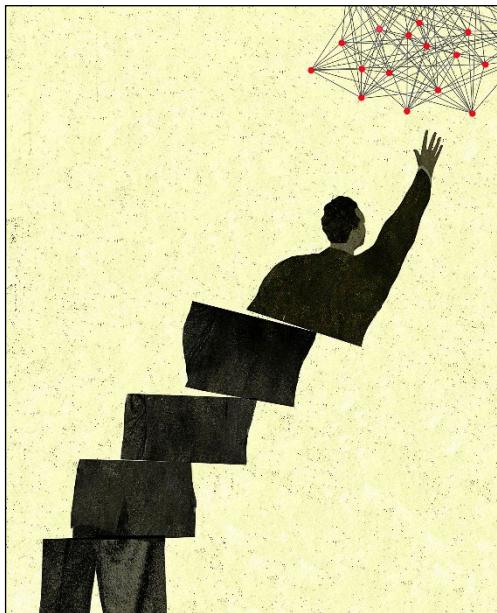


Marleen Gorris' feminist classic *A Question of Silence* (1982) features what may be one of the most memorable court scenes ever filmed, offering us an occasion to think through modes and gestures of feminist refusal. There are other scenes: a 15<sup>th</sup> century image depicting Calefurnia as it pops up in Julie Stone Peter's *Law as Performance*; the bacchants in ecstasy tearing apart the son/king as figured in Bonnie Honig's reading of Euripides's play in *A Feminist Theory of Refusal*; and perhaps also Nancy Spero's Sheela na gigs... Juxtaposing these and yet other scenes, this talk returns to critical legal themes of disruption, rupture, and minor jurisprudence in an attempt to further populate a feminist heterotopia that is the elsewhere of law's mediation.

Special Event 4

**Working with Disruptions: Life Happens**

Laura Petersen (University of Lucerne) and Valeria Vázquez Guevara (University of Hong Kong)



Join us for an interactive conversation about how 'disruption' is a reality of academic life as an early career scholar. Building on our intellectual and personal friendship, our aim is to invite open discussion and share practical advice as well as prompt a more theoretical reflection on the ways and means of rigorous scholarship in uncertain times. How do we reclaim our attention for the work that matters and push back against disruptions and noise (institutional, technological, personal, societal)? How do we acknowledge the traditions and inheritances of our disciplinary training whilst answering the constant call for new ideas and innovation? Do we need moments of change or is it possible to be consistent without falling into a trap of stagnation? We hope to prompt constructive discussion on different paths through academia and life, whilst keeping in mind the Swiss saying 'irgendöppis isch immer' (something always comes up)!

*Image: Illustration by Brian Stauffer. Published in the New Yorker, 16 June 2014.*

## Faculty & Speakers



**Shane Chalmers** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law, Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Adelaide Law School, a Vice President of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia, and Book Review Editor of Law & Literature. He is currently completing a book on *The Colonial Legal Imaginary: A Carnivalesque Jurisprudence* (CUP, forthcoming), with previous publications including *Liberia and the Dialectic of Law: Critical Theory, Pluralism, and the Rule of Law* (Routledge 2018), *The Routledge Handbook of International Law and the Humanities* (Routledge 2021, with Sundhya Pahuja) and a special issue of Law & Literature on *Colonial Legal Imaginaries | Southern Literary Futures* (with Desmond Manderson).



**Lara Montesinos Coleman** is Professor of International Law, Ethics and Political Economy at the University of Sussex and author of *Struggles for the Human: Violent Legality and the Politics of Rights*, published by Duke University Press in 2024 and shortlisted for the Susan Strange Prize. She has published widely on the philosophy and politics of human rights, law and resistance, as well as on questions of critique and on philosophy and method. Her work has a strongly ethnographic component as a result of her long-term involvement with social movement struggles in Colombia, where she is currently working with the Yukpa indigenous people on reparations for genocide linked to open-cast coal-mining at the hands of Anglo-Swiss mining giant, Glencore. She is currently working on two

projects. One is a decolonial re-reading of provisions for reparation that give weight to allegations of genocide linked to energy extractivism, through the lens of the Yukpa's struggle. The other is a book, *Insurgent Human: Radical Ethics for an Inhuman Age*, which develops some of the ideas around ethics and political affect at the end of *Struggles for the Human*.



**Başak Ertur** is a Reader at the Centre for Research Architecture (CRA) at Goldsmiths and a Research Fellow at Forensic Architecture. Prior to joining the CRA, she taught at Birkbeck Law School for over a decade. Her work is engaged with questions of legal violence, legal performativity, and more broadly with law's epistemologies and aesthetics. She has published articles and book chapters on a range of topics including: conceptualising and studying state violence; academic freedom in the War on Terror; genocide denialism and memory laws; filmic representations of transgender bodies before the law; counter-monumental practices of resistance; conspiracy theories and the law; the 'deep state'; and on Walter Benjamin's seminal essay 'Toward the Critique of Violence.' Her book *Spectacles and Specters: A Performative Theory of Political Trials* (2022) was awarded the 2024 SLSA Socio-Legal Theory and History Prize.



**Julen Etxabe** is Associate Professor at the Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia. His current research combines legal and literary theory to identify a new model of dialogical judgment emerging in the area of human rights, which is transforming inherited notions of reasoning, rights, authority, and law in the post-national and diverse societies of the 21st century.

Grounded in cultural and humanistic approaches to law, Julen is the author of *The Experience of Tragic Judgment* (Routledge, 2013) and has edited *Cultural History of Law in Antiquity* (Bloomsbury, 2019). He is also the co-editor of *Rancière and Law* (Routledge, 2018) and *Living in a Law*

*Transformed: Encounters with the Works of James Boyd White* (Michigan, 2014). From 2012 to 2017 he was editor-in-chief of *No-Foundations: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Law and Justice* and is a member of the editorial committee of *Law & Humanities*. Julen has been a recipient of numerous fellowships, including a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue doctoral studies at the University of Michigan Law School and the Kone Foundation Research Grant.



**Malte-Christian Gruber** is Professor of Private Law and Legal Philosophy at the University of Giessen. He studied law and philosophy at the universities of Frankfurt/Main and Mainz. After substitute professorships in Bremen and Frankfurt/Main, he was, from 2017 to 2023, Professor of Legal Philosophy at the University of Lucerne, where he also held the role of Head of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Legal Studies – lucernaiuris. Malte's research interests include legal philosophy and private law theory, IT law and the law of digital economy, the law of new technologies and life sciences. Currently, he is principal investigator on the project 'Human Medical Data Bodies: Generating Bio-Digital Twins'. Recent publications include essays on digital twins, on human-machine relations in

'deep medicine', on future models of climate change liability, and on futurities of law. He also edits the book series *Beiträge zur Rechts-, Gesellschafts- und Kulturkritik* and *Recht der neuen Technologien (RNT)*.



**Mónica López Lerma** is an Associate Professor of Spanish and Humanities at Reed College. She received a PhD in Comparative Literature and a Graduate Certificate in Film Studies from the University of Michigan. She also holds a law degree from the University of Valencia and an LL.M. in Jurisprudence from the European Academy of Legal Theory. At Reed she teaches a variety of interdisciplinary courses in film theory, political documentaries, law and violence, justice and the senses, cinema and human rights, and comparative literature.

Mónica is the author of *Sensing Justice through Contemporary Spanish Cinema: Aesthetics, Politics, Law* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), co-editor of *Rancière and Law* (Routledge, 2018) and editor

of *Cartografías in/justas: Representaciones culturales del espacio urbano y rural en la España contemporánea* (Editorial Comares, 2024). She is currently working on a new book project that is tentatively titled *Documentaries Against the Law: Evidence, Affect, and Reflexivity*.



**Desmond Manderson** is jointly appointed in the College of Law and College of Arts & Social Sciences at The Australian National University. He directs the Centre for Law, Arts and the Humanities, designing innovative interdisciplinary courses with English, philosophy, art theory and history, political and critical theory, and beyond. He has authored several books including *From Mr. Sin to Mr. Big* (Oxford University Press 1993); *Songs Without Music: Aesthetic Dimensions of Law and Justice* (University of California Press 2000); *Proximity, Levinas, and the Soul of Law* (McGill-Queen's University Press 2006); *Kangaroo Courts and the Rule of Law: The Legacy of Modernism* (Routledge 2012). His most recent monograph, *Danse Macabre: Temporalities of Law in the Visual Arts* (Cambridge University Press 2019) received the 2019 Penny Pether Prize for research in law and the humanities, and the 2020 Australian Legal Research Award for best book. His co-written play *Twenty Minutes with the Devil* (with Luis Gomez Romero) premiered at The Street Theatre, Canberra in 2022.



**Greta Olson** is Director of the Center for Diversity, Media, and Law (DiML) and Professor of American and British Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Giessen, Germany. She is Principal Investigator of a project on images of migration and human rights in the interdisciplinary research group “Human Rights Discourse in Migration Societies” (MeDiMi). Greta was Fellow at the Käte Hamburger Center for Advanced Study in the Humanities “Law as Culture” in Bonn (2014, 2016), was general editor of the *European Journal of English Studies* (EJES) from 2010 through 2024, and is, with Jeanne Gaakeer, the co-founder of the European Network for Law and Literature. Greta authored *From Law and Literature to Legality and Affect* (Oxford UP, 2022), is co-creator of the film

*Beyond the Gaze: Media Awareness for Media Inclusivity* (2023), and co-edited *Diversity Issues in the U.S.A.: Transnational Perspectives on the 2024 Presidential Elections* (transcript 2024). She works and wishes to facilitate projects on the nexus between artistic practice, political activism, and academic analysis and publishes in the areas of critical American studies, law and culture, feminism and sexuality studies, and narrative and politics.



**Laura Petersen** is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland and an Adjunct Research Fellow at La Trobe University, Australia. Her research is cross-disciplinary, integrating approaches to visual culture and literature with jurisprudence, particularly in Germany in the 20th Century. Currently, Laura is working with Steven Howe and Nicole Schraner on a major SNSF research grant on the project “Imagining Justice: Law, Politics and Visual Culture in Weimar Germany”. Laura won the international writing prize *Zipporah B. Wiseman Prize for Scholarship on Law, Literature and Justice* (2021) and the *Harold Luntz Prize* (2023). Her first monograph, *Practices of Restitution: Law and Aesthetics in Modern Germany* will be published by CUP in 2026.



**Sabarish Suresh** is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law. He works on law and humanities, legal history, constitutional law, and critical theory. His work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in the *Law and History Review*, *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, *Law and Literature*, the *Elgar Research Handbook in Law and Literature*, and the *Cambridge Handbook of Law, Literature, and Postcolonialism*. Sabarish is currently writing a book, tentatively titled *Cartojuridism. Law, Cartography, and Jurisdiction in Colonial India*, which will present a historical examination of how cartography and law were intricately linked in colonial India. In addition, he is working on another book, based on his PhD thesis, titled *The Trauma of the Indian Constitution: Partition and Repetition*, forthcoming with Edinburgh University Press.

Sabarish earned his JSD at the Benjamin N Cardozo School of Law, New York, with a thesis that was awarded the 2023 Julien Mezey Dissertation Prize by the Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and the Humanities (LCH) and the 2022 Jacob Burns Medal by Cardozo Law. He has held visiting positions at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory in Frankfurt, the National Law School of India University, Bangalore, and is currently visiting fellow at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Legal Studies in Lucerne.



**Valeria Vázquez Guevara** is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong. Her research engages with law-and-humanities methodologies to examine how the role of, and contestations to, international law and its institutions shape the quality of North-South and South-South relations. Valeria's forthcoming monograph, *Truth Commissions and International Law: Jurisdiction, Representation, Authority* will be published by Cambridge University Press. The thesis won The University of Melbourne Chancellor's Prize for Excellence and Melbourne Law School's Harold Luntz Thesis Prize. Her research has been published in *Leiden Journal of International Law*, *London Review of International Law*, the *Routledge Handbook of International Law and the Humanities*, among others. Valeria

currently serves as member of the executive committee of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia, co-chair of ANZSIL's History and Theory of International Law Interest Group (until July 2025), and co-convener of the ESIL's Critical Approaches to International Law Interest Group. She was co-Managing Editor of the *Australian Feminist Law Journal* (2021-2023).

## Convenors



**Steven Howe** is Senior Research Fellow at the University of Lucerne, where he also serves as Associate Director of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Legal Studies. He studied German and Comparative Literature at the universities of Manchester, Hamburg and Exeter, and has been a visiting fellow at the Humanities Research Centre of The Australian National University in Canberra. Recent publications include essays on legal cinema in interwar Germany, on contemporary British tribunal theatre, and on artistic pre-enactments, as well as a special issue of the journal *Pólemos* on 'Law and Art in the Aftermath', co-edited with Laura Petersen. In 2022, he was awarded a grant by the Swiss National Science Foundation to lead the interdisciplinary project 'Imagining Justice: Law, Politics and Popular Visual Culture in Weimar Germany'.



**Vagias Karavas** is Professor of Legal Sociology, Legal Theory and Private Law at the University of Lucerne. He is currently Head of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Legal Studies and a founding member of the Centre for Law and Health in Lucerne. Vagias studied in Athens and Frankfurt, and completed his Habilitation at the University of Fribourg in 2016. His book publications include *Digitale Grundrechte: Elemente einer Verfassung des Informationsflusses im Internet* (2007) and *Körperverfassungsrecht: Entwurf eines inklusiven Biomedizinrechts* (2018). Vagias has been a visiting fellow at the Department for Anthropology at the University of California Irvine, and at the Institute for Comparative Research in Law & Political Economy at Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto. His teaching and research focus on interdisciplinary themes in legal sociology and legal theory, including biomedicine law and the law of new technologies.

## Presentations & Abstracts

Listed in alphabetical order according to surnames

### **Romance in Politics; Politics in Romans**

Jack Chou (University of Hong Kong)

There is a curious pair of mirroring notions found in Schmitt's *Politische Romantik* and Kundera's *L'Art du roman*: romance in politics and politics in *romans*. Concerning the domains of politics and of *romans*, the political theorist and the politically themed *romancier*s share the same posture of upholding the autonomy of one domain against the other domain's usurpation. What they have together pointed to is an attitude particularly for the understanding of juridico-ethico-political elements in artworks against juridico-ethico-political readings; this attitude is what Schmitt refers to as romanticism and Kundera the art of the *roman*. The attitude's gist is to aestheticise the subject matter and to turn it into an artwork. By doing so, all juridico-ethico-political judgments are suspended. The suspension is possible by transforming all juridico-ethico-political elements into the artwork's material—an *occasio* for the work—and they can hence only be judged on that basis. Aesthetic judgment—playful and ironic in contrast to its serious counterparts—is ever non-static and self-subversive. As a result, not only the juridico-ethico-political elements but also those judgments are engulfed in the artwork. While to Kundera the attitude is crucial for the art of the *roman* to carry out its *raison d'être*, Schmitt rightly warns against its entrance into the political domain due to its inability to decide. For the attitude is essentially a worldview that cannot be limited to the domain of *romans*; it is an unstopping force that materialises everything encountered until the whole world becomes its *opus*. But Schmitt's repulsion against the unserious attitude only has force on his side of the mirror. On the mirror's other side, ie the domain of *romans*, one finds an unintentional response by Kundera: Schmitt's critique can also be suspended by materialising it into a 'comical absence of the comical'—a playful suspension of the playful, mirroring the suspension of the serious juridico-ethico-political. These observations are taken up to reflect on the event's theme by assessing how they affect the framing and interpretation of disruptions in law and art.

### **AIE: Confirmation or Disruption?**

Quinn Edwards (University of the Sunshine Coast)

Artificial intelligence has the possibility to reflect and mirror society, to reinforce and perpetuate cultural biases and norms. However, the novelty of the technology is also its strength. It is the *novus*, the *techne*, the new with the potential to reveal, challenge and disrupt. Artificially intelligent entities (AIE) pose a multitude of challenges to law, and while law operates on precedent, on moulding novelty to fit its pre-existing understanding of the world, it can also be a way of progressing, of shaping the cultural imaginary. Utilising AIE to articulate more nuanced understandings of ultimate value within law, and legal personhood as a whole, allows the law a broader perspective of these concepts themselves. Could these considerations of ultimate value be utilised as a way to shift the ontology of how we view subjectivity and objectivity within Western legal systems?

The Western canon of basing subjectivity discussions on theories of sentience and consciousness is far from universal. More nuanced relational value theories have developed in alternative cultural imaginaries, providing ways to disrupt and progress ultimate value beyond just AIE deliberations. Irene Watson writes on the Australian First Nations conceptions of value, an ontology which operates from the perspective of universality rather than anthropomorphism. In African philosophy, Jeckers & Atuire describe personhood is either seen as a process of becoming, or an interrelation with others.

Utilising these alternate cultural perspectives, this presentation will outline the potential paths for AIE – the fears of cultural bias confirmation and the hopes of progressive disruption – and the effect of choosing to disrupt.

## **Deep Disruption: Large Language Models and the Hermeneutic Experience of the Legal Professions**

Julie Hoppenbrouwers (Erasmus School of Law)

Recent developments in and rapid implementation of large language models in the daily practices of the legal profession reraise longstanding questions on the role of language in law. This presentation explores how and whether the linguistic underpinnings of LLMs may translate into disruptive implications in practice by examining how LLMs alter the hermeneutic experience of legal practitioners.

The centrality of language in law is commonly recognized in scholarship, albeit still mostly as an object or an instrument. Hans-George Gadamer (1975) offers a view of language as revealing a 'world'. In his philosophical hermeneutics, language is fundamental in our making sense of the world. In material hermeneutics (Idhe 1998; Verbeek 2005), technologies have similarly been argued to mediate our relation to the world. Gadamer's exploration of the metaphoricity of language and the dialogical structure of understanding can demonstrate how law gains its being through language. The typology offered by Asle Kiran (2015) of the 'two-sidedness of technology' in shaping both 'human' and 'world' is adopted to demonstrate how this being may be altered with the introduction of LLMs.

Material hermeneutics holds that our understanding of law has always been mediated by technologies. The question here is whether and in what sense the mediation introduced by LLMs could be characterised as 'disruptive'. Through the example of a judge employing an LLM in contractual interpretation, engaging with the work of Jonathan Arbel and David Hoffman (2024), the LLM is shown to alter the hermeneutic experience of the law. LLMs may transform the linguistic conditions that shape the ontological (revealing/concealing), epistemological (magnification/reduction), practical (enabling/constraining) and ethical (involving/alienating) dimensions of law. This constitutes a disruption to our making sense of the world, an unsettling of the criteria which we relied on to separate the valuable from the superfluous, a particular form of sociotechnical disruption (Hopster 2021) that will be characterised 'deep disruption'. Contrasting this with an approach based on dialogical hermeneutics, the experience highlights the dependence of various central values in law on the dialogical structure of legal language.

## **Edition of One – “No Rights”**

Gavin Keeney (Independent Scholar)

Edition of One is a literary agency for artists and scholars. “No Rights” is a proposed status for collectively produced works of literary-artistic scholarship, inclusive of the elective abolition of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The project envisions a new ecosystem for scholarship that eschews proprietary rights and authorial privileges. The presentation will focus on the justification for the elective abolition of IPR plus the need to protect new works from misappropriation and/or recuperation by Capital through the transfer of moral rights to works. Based on the recently completed PhD Project, “Works for Works: ‘No Rights’” (ZRC SAZU, 2021-2024), the agenda is meant to counter current trends toward the hyper-commodification of the knowledge commons and the attendant emergence of neo-feudalism.

## **Mangrove Discourses**

Shelley Kolstad (Queensland University of Technology)

My doctoral thesis 'Revealing mangrove place law through a critique of critical plant studies, non-human philosophy and non-human legal theory' addresses my primary research question 'what if mangroves (individuals and communities) and their physical attachments and connections to place was the source of law rather than the object of law?' This question directly responds to one of the conference topics: "How does the recent (re-)thinking of human and non-human agencies disrupt conventional notions of normativity and subjectivity – in law, politics and culture?"

My paper presents discourses on mangroves and mangrove places. The presence of mangroves is revealed in this presentation through Deleuzean inspired milieu narratives. These narratives and the discussion that follows each narrative highlight multiple connections between mangroves and their environment including the ocean, land, atmosphere, other plants, humans and non-humans. These connections reveal opportunities for Deleuzean territorialisation and the development of interkingdoms or assemblages. It is from these connections I argue that normativity and law arises.

These discourses are illuminated with photographs with art permitting a direct engagement between mangroves and participating audiences in the discourse. They offer an opportunity to connect with mangroves in a more instinctual way. The challenge of this thesis is to overcome our own human subjectivity or lived experiences to view life as it unfolds for mangroves and to paraphrase Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing in her book 'Mushroom at the End of the World, On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruin,' identify more than the gatherings of life surrounding and connected to mangroves, but the lifeways or happenings made possible by mangroves (2015, p. 38).

## **Todd Phillips: Directing the Event**

Alex More (University of Notre Dame Australia)

Opening at the box office to a storm of controversy and sensationalism from the public and critics alike, Todd Phillips' *Joker* marked a critical juncture in contemporary cultural discourse, exposing heightened political volatility as symptomatic of online culture. The *Joker* phenomenon was, undoubtedly, an Event in the Žižekian sense, "something shocking, out of joint, that [...] interrupts the usual flow of things". Whether it be the bachelor party ritual, the mid-life crisis or the road trip, Phillips' films at large take a keen interest in the Event, with *Joker* playing this out at a metadiegetic register. Why did this film cause such a disruption?

Using *Joker* as a model, this paper moves towards an understanding of the mediated event as object, process and mode, conceiving of Event in postmodernity as bound up in economies of reification and circuitous discourse. Precisely because it is set in 1981 – unsubtly positioning itself at the origin of Western neoliberalisation, the dawn of the Reagan era – *Joker* stages the death of the Keynesian welfare state (as epitomized in the figure of New York City as bankrupt) in a critical mode, while simultaneously suggesting a yearning for some kind of imaginary pre-traumatic collective identity. Janus-faced, Event in *Joker* looks forwards with pretensions that expand our conception of the possible, while also signalling a conservative desire for a restoration of *Gemeinschaft*. In this sense, the film negotiates the disruptive potential of the event in binding, or breaking, the demos.

Far from Fukuyama's celebration of liberal democracy as marking "the end of history", this paper suggests that the gradual decay of liberal democracy and its systematic replacement by neoliberalism (and now, perhaps, 'techno-feudalism') ushers in a new age of the Event, in which the "society of the spectacle" reconstitutes the banality of postmodern experience as a mosaic of tabloid journalism, sensationalism, and 'fake news', all of which reflect a general tendency towards the ossification of the trivial, with this relentless 'eventization' deferring confrontation with the collective trauma of ecological collapse – the event which threatens to extinguish our species.

## **Disruptions and Crises: Voegelin and Husserl on Sense and Society**

Jan Okoński (University of Lodz)

This presentation explores how Eric Voegelin and Edmund Husserl – two thinkers deeply engaged with questions of meaning and social order – addressed the disruptions and crises of their times. Although Voegelin is often regarded primarily as a political philosopher, his legal background (he was Hans Kelsen's student) played a crucial role in shaping his analysis of order. Husserl, best known as the founder of phenomenology, in contrast, approached the crisis of European modernity through the lens of phenomenology. In *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, he diagnosed the intellectual and moral fragmentation of European culture, including its political structures. Husserl's work on *Staatslehre* suggests that the idea of the state must be understood not only as a legal construct but as a manifestation of intersubjective meaning-making (as Alfred Schütz developed it later). From phenomenological point of view, legal and political institutions derive their legitimacy from their role in sustaining a shared lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*), and disruptions occur when this foundation erodes.

Disruption can be communicated in language, or belong to language itself, in that case we will have a phenomenon that communication calls noise, which means misreading the words or sentences of the sender's statement. It can be improperly decoded, which is due, for example, to different axiological affiliations of the recipient-addressee.

Voegelin's exploration of order and disorder in history offers a profound lens through which to examine contemporary disruptions, whether political, theological, or cultural. His critique of ideological movements and his concept of 'Gnosticism' as a force of societal upheaval remain highly relevant in analyzing today's political and epistemic crises. Likewise, phenomenology – particularly as developed by thinkers like Husserl – provides a crucial methodological tool for examining how individuals and societies experience and interpret disruption.

By bringing Voegelin's legal-political analysis into conversation with Husserl's phenomenological approach, this presentation highlights how both thinkers sought to restore a sense of order and meaning in the face of societal crises. Their insights remain relevant today, as contemporary societies grapple with political fragmentation, ideological extremism, and the challenge of sustaining legitimate institutions in an era of rapid transformation.

## **From Disruption to Legitimacy: Cultural Narratives and the Justification of Legal Exception in Russia**

Kirill Olmezov (Ghent University)

In recent years, national populist movements have reshaped public discourse across Europe, challenging institutional norms in the name of sovereignty, identity, tradition. To some extent, Russia aligns with this broader right-populist shift, employing nationalist and external threat rhetoric. However, unlike populist movements that operate within democratic constraints, Russia presents a different kind of disruption—it reconfigures legal foundations by embedding exceptional legal measures in historical, moral, ideological narratives. These measures, which are presented as inevitable and morally necessary for prosperity, in fact, are reinforcing the regime and suppressing dissent while deviating from domestic legal traditions and international norms.

One example is the drafting of prisoners to fight in Ukraine, initially an extralegal practice, later codified into law and justified through blood redemption, invoking Soviet precedents. Prisoners who served and survived were pardoned, bypassing and eroding existing legal procedures. Similarly, the 2020 Constitutional Amendments, which reset presidential term limits for the incumbent, were framed and collectively approved by the population as a legitimate exception for the only leader who can guarantee the country's existence and stability.

At the heart of this legitimacy framing process is Meta-Law, a cultural framework in which codified norms are subordinated to extra-legal values such as truth, justice, conscience. In Russian culture, these values are seen as transcendent moral imperatives capable of overriding formal legality. This distinctive legal culture enables the construction of legal narratives that justify exceptional measures, embedding them within deeply rooted cultural and ideological frameworks.

This presentation examines how Russian legislative narratives draw on cultural concepts to legitimize exceptional legal measures. It will explore how extra-legal values serve as the building blocks for legal justifications that sustain governance legitimacy.

The presentation will demonstrate how cultural features are instrumentalized in legislative discourse to reframe legal disruptions as moral necessities. The presentation stems from the intermediate results of my PhD research, which applies the Discursive-Historical Approach to analyze the role of cultural narratives in shaping legal legitimacy. As Russia's political trajectory continues to impact European stability, understanding how law is transformed into a cultural-ideological instrument is key to assessing the resilience of legal systems in disrupted contexts.

### **Narratives of Metaverse Filipino Workers (MFW): Alternative Labor in Digital Futures**

Joy Hannah Panaligan (University of Southern California)

The research will explore labor within the metaverse and map the development of play-to-earn (P2E) gaming reframe and disrupts how people make sense of 'work'. The Philippines has a long history of adapting to new forms of labor from traditional labor paths like migrating for work as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) to leveraging online platforms to earn dollars as Online Freelance Workers (OFW 2.0) and currently play-to-earn gaming (P2E) enabling Filipinos to earn money through a popular blockchain game Axie Infinity. It led to reframing narratives around P2E to Metaverse Filipino Workers (MFW), which occupy a liminal position wherein they are not just gamers involved in traditional labor but exist in a hybrid role where play and labor intersect. It may cast off an initial impression that people engaged in play-to-earn models are just after the hype. This community survived despite the unstable market shifts in the following years. MFWs continuously participated and promoted P2E as the new form of digital labor using game mechanics to construct or simulate labor-like activities in the form of grinding and completing quests. Extending this to a macro-level view will help see workers' cultural and economic discourse in the global periphery and highlight the Philippines' role in the global gig economy shifts and progresses alongside new technologies. In this study, I employed a combination of ethnographic lens and Fairclough's (1992) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how these workers navigate and construct the notion of 'digital labor,' economic opportunity, and identity in metaverse spaces. I examined the contents posted by a popular local gaming guild, Yield Guild Games (YGG), from 2021 to 2025, where Filipino workers convene to promote the idea of 'Metaverse Filipino Workers' and map discourses and narratives are conveyed and evolve in social media platforms (Facebook and Youtube). I incorporated the concept of "sociotechnological imaginaries" (Jasanoff & Kim, 2009) to analyze the value of labor evolving alongside technological innovations. It helps us understand how collective visions of labor within the metaverse are actualized in reality and yield influence in public discourse.

## **Nature is Made: The Legal Invention of the Venetian Lagoon**

Veronica Pecile (LUMSA University of Rome)

In this presentation, I suggest a critical reintroduction of materialism in the debate on law and ecology. In this perspective, matter is not idealised or depicted as original – as it is framed in much of the new materialist theoretical strain – but emerges as the result of praxis; it does not come before the form but it is made, through and with the form – in particular, the legal form. This means considering “nature” not as anterior to law but as made, endlessly built and unbuilt through legal operations, as posited by legal historian Yan Thomas.

To make this theoretical point, I will focus on the case of the Venetian lagoon, a human artifact that has long been made and remade through law, and that epitomises the artificial character of what we consider natural – its continuous disruption and reconstitution. In the historical trajectory of the legal construction of the Venetian lagoon and the current practice of movements substracting spaces and resources from privatisation and exploitation, it is possible to find legal tools that could be used to recognise a collective subject and, as it will be explained, to institute the commons.

## **Photography's Role in Disrupting the Archive**

Anna Stone-Stacy (The Australian National University)

Australia's colonial legal system is bound in an objective construction of time which refuses the cultural narratives that have constituted its existence. Western legal positivism represents time as independent from subjective experience. This has hidden the constitutive myth of modernity which provides a subjective temporality of progress binding Indigenous norms in the 'primitive past'. Thus, the colonial time, represented as external to cultural relationships, performs a deeply social reorganisation of two normative systems, one whose time is over, and another whose time is eternal. However, a representation of homogenous and chronological time ignores the reality that Indigenous and colonial systems of law continue to exist in tension. Instead, art generates a capacity to comprehend the fractured, and unstable colonial temporality by more coherently representing the co-existence of multiple subjective experiences of time in colonial states. In particular, photographic engagement with archival materials produces an understanding of how the hermeneutical superiority of an external colonial time has concealed a complex temporal legal landscape.

## **Creature, Creator and 'The Modern Prometheus': The Emotional Experience of Time in the Crisis of Legitimation of Judge-Made Law in the Nineteenth Century**

Luiza Tavares da Motta (Queen Mary University of London)

In the intersection between law, history, and literature, this paper investigates the rhetorical role of the emotional experience of time in the crisis and process of legitimisation of judge-made law in the nineteenth century. Three assumptions underlie this claim: (i) that time is an experience that is emotional and communicable through language; (ii) that this emotional experience of time shapes narrative; (iii) that the emotional experience of time in the nineteenth century is one of time as unstable, unpredictable. This paper proposes a reading of nineteenth-century common law theory through gothic fiction. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* provides the lens of analysis for this investigation, considering literature as a window to the emotional experience of time. The reason for this choice is twofold: (i) the gothic was a particularly popular form of literature in the nineteenth century; (ii) Mary Shelley's complications of temporality in *Frankenstein* are particularly elucidative of the emotional experience of a time of disturbance. This paper examines the rhetorical role of verb tenses in engaging emotion through a rhetorical narratological analysis

of the ‘timeless’ present tense. Developing a model of verb tense as a temporal-rhetorical resource capable of engaging emotion, this paper will focus on how verb tenses construct narrative in fiction, and in law reports from the House of Lords in the nineteenth century. In order to understand this crisis of legitimisation through the lens of temporality, this paper draws especially from the writings of Lazar (2019) providing an analysis of law and of literature from a rhetorical narratological point of view. This paper provides a more complete, albeit fragmentary, history of the crisis and process of legitimisation of judge-made law in the nineteenth century by analysing the emotional experience of a time of disruption and its implications in nineteenth-century law, opening new paths of investigation.

### **The ‘New Voyeurism’: Criminalizing the Creation of ‘Deepfake Porn’**

Rüya Tuna Toparlak (University of Lucerne)

Lawmakers around the world are turning their attention to deepfake sexual abuse to reduce its prevalence and provide redress to victims. Thus far, both civil and criminal law reforms have tended to focus on the distribution of this material.

Far less attention has been given to targeting the root cause, namely the creation of these ‘sexual digital forgeries’. Together with Clare McGlynn, I have recently presented a first comprehensive examination of the criminalisation of the creation of sexually explicit deepfakes, advancing the idea that this phenomenon should be understood as the ‘new voyeurism’. There, we explore the harmful nature of this behaviour, including the ‘invisible threat’ of deepfake sexual abuse now pervading the lives of all women and girls, and justify the deployment of criminal sanctions. This we follow with an analysis of the laws in jurisdictions that currently criminalise creating sexually explicit deepfakes.

In this presentation, I will draw on this recent work and talk about the current epidemic of sexual digital forgeries, their legal standing and legal policy decisions around the world to combat the abuse as well as the applicable laws in Switzerland.

### **Disrupting Whiteness: How Can White People Participate in Collective Struggle?**

Griffin Werner (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)

In 2017, the Unite the Right rally brought the underbelly of white supremacy and the desire for a white nation state to mainstream American consciousness. And in 2025, various alt-right figures are providing white people will communities of belonging rooted in victim narratives of resentment. James Baldwin writes that “as long as you think you are white, there is no hope for you.” That is, white people need to let go of the way whiteness is thought of as a grounding category of identity which implicates one in a community of belonging. But how might white people disrupt the privileges which make them white? From the 1960s until the end of his life in 2019, Noel Ignatiev consistently argued that the working class, regardless of race, could not unite in a class struggle without dismantling white supremacy. Rather than study whiteness as an existent culture, he argued that whiteness ought to be abolished by disrupting the privileges which define what it means to be a member of the “white club.” Ignatiev called on white people to respond to manifestations of white supremacy as if it were directed at them and subsequently confront institutions that reproduce race divisions. While one might not identify as white, they become white when, for instance, members of Immigration and Customs Enforcement ignore them when boarding a train looking for (il)legal immigrants. Is political community beyond the strictures of identity possible in today’s political climate? While blackness is defined by a specific relationship to anti-black violence instigated by white people and constituted by the United States, black people have become so much more. Whiteness was (and is) defined by ritualized violence against black (and other) people, justifying and maintaining the privileges of whiteness, but can white people become more?